

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 WELLIN 04006 062310Z
ACTION EA-12

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-----120265 062322Z /70

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3964

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 04006

FOR IOR, IBS, IPS

EO 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: PHILIPPINES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

1. UNDER THE HEADING "RIGHTS IN THE PHILIPPINES," THE "CHRISTCHURCH PRESS (74,000), THE SOUTH ISLAND'S MAJOR NEWSPAPER, COMMENTED EDITORIALLY, SEPTEMBER 3,
2. "THE DICTATORIAL REGIME OF PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS, IN THE PHILIPPINES, HAS COME UNDER INCREASINGLY CRITICAL SCRUTINY IN WASHINGTON, WHERE PRESIDENT CARTER'S OUTSPOKEN CHAMPIONSHIP OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS THE NEW GUIDELINE FOR AMERICA'S RELATIONSHIPS TOWARDS COUNTRIES WHERE POLITICAL POWER IS WIELDED BY UNDEMOCRATIC REGIMES. MR MARCOS MADE GOOD USE OF THE FORUM PROVIDED BY THE RECENT CONVENING OF THE WORLD LAW CONFERENCE IN MANILA. HE INSISTED THAT NOT ONLY WAS THERE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE PHILIPPINES, BUT ALSO THAT HIS COUNTRY WAS MOVING RAPIDLY TOWARDS 'NORMALITY'.
3. "...BUT HE ADDS, AS ALWAYS, A CAUTIONARY NOTE - THAT IF DISSENT CONTINUES TO BE EXPRESSED VIOLENTLY, FORCE WILL BE USED TO END IT, AND MARTIAL LAW WILL REMAIN. A SETTLEMENT IN MINDANAO SEEMS UNLIKELY ON THE TERMS PROPOSED BY MR MARCOS, INCLUDING PARTICIPATION BY THE MORO NATIONAL

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LIBERATION FRONT IN A REGIONAL GOVERNMENT.

5. "ALSO, LITTLE HOPE CAN BE HELD FOR INTEGRATION BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS, AS EIGHT OF THE 13 PROVINCES ARE PREDOMINANTLY CHRISTIAN.
6. "AS FOR THE DETAINEES, THE RECENTLY REPORTED RELEASE

OF FEWER THAN 500 IS NO MORE THAN A TOKEN.

7. "...MR MARCOS ADMITS THAT NEARLY 5000 PRISONERS ARE HELD IN MILITARY DETENTION; THE ACTUAL FIGURE IS BELIEVED TO BE C

EHC

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THAT NONE WERE HELD BECAUSE OF THEIR POLITICAL BELIEFS WILL CERTAINLY BE DERISIVELY REJECTED.

8. "...MR MARCOS WILL NO DOUBT CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THE COMMITMENT OF HIS REGIME TO RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WHETHER HE WILL IMPRESS WASHINGTON, WHOSE SUPPORT HE BADLY NEEDS WHEN SEEKING WORLD BANK AID TO RELIEVE HIS OWN ECONOMIC PRESSURES, IS VERY MUCH OPEN TO QUESTION."

ANDERSON

NOTE BY OC/T: WELLINGTON 4006---AS RECEIVED; CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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